

**Amendments to the Claims:****Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) A device for retracting body skin-fat folds ~~during from interfering with~~ diagnostic or surgical procedures comprising:

an elongated element adapted to be removably mounted to a diagnostic or surgical procedure table;

an elongate arm adapted to be slidably mounted on said elongated element, said elongate arm having a plurality of open channels;

a plurality of flexible elements adapted to be received on said elongate arm; each of said flexible elements being received in one of said open channels said flexible elements comprise a plurality of raised portions adapted to be received by said open channels to limit the range of motion of the flexible elements through the open channels; and

a gripping device connected to each of said plurality of flexible elements, where said gripping device has sufficient width to grasp grasps and retract retracts body skin-fat folds from interfering with diagnostic or surgical procedures, ~~said body skin folds being fat folds or excess skin folds.~~

2. (Canceled).

3. (Currently amended) The device according to claim 2-1 wherein said raised portions define generally a circular area.

4. (Original) The device according to claim 1 wherein said elongate arm defines generally a curved area.

5. (Original) The device according to claim 1 wherein said gripping device is bifurcated.

6. (Original) The device according to claim 1 further comprising a material covering said gripping device.

7. (Original) The device according to claim 6 wherein said material is made of an elastomeric material.

8. (Original) The material according to claim 6 wherein said material is replaceable.

9. (Currently amended) A method for retracting body skin folds during diagnostic or surgical procedures, the method comprising the steps of:

positioning a device over the body skin folds, said body skin folds being fat folds or excess skin folds, said device comprising an elongated element adapted to be removably mounted to a diagnostic or surgical procedure table; an elongate arm adapted to be slidably mounted on said elongated element, said elongate arm having a plurality of open channels; a plurality of flexible elements adapted to be received on said elongate arm, said flexible elements having a plurality of raised portions adapted to be received by said open channels; and a gripping device connected to each of said plurality of flexible elements;

grasping the body ~~skin~~ fat folds with said gripping device connected to each of said plurality of flexible elements; and

positioning said flexible elements through said open channels of said elongate arm wherein said raised portions hold each flexible element in a temporary fixed position retracting said fat folds or excess skin folds from interfering with diagnostic or surgical procedures.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said raised portions define generally a circular area.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said elongate arm defines generally a curved area.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said gripping device is bifurcated.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said device further comprises a material covering said gripping device.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein said material is made of an elastomeric material.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein said material is replaceable.